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EDITOR R.PALME DUTT

LABOUR MONTHLY

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Alan Brown
Hammer or Anvil?

Alan Sapper and H. S. Lloyd
Special TUC

Bob Wright
International Trade Union Unity

Betty Sinclair
Northern Ireland

Chile/Betty Tate : Poulson/F. H. A. Micklewright
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LABOUR MONTHLY

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Notes of the Month

HAMMER OR ANVIL?

By Alan Brown*

> **'. . . it is the interest of all rich nations, that the greatest part of the poor should almost never be idle, and yet continually spend what they get. . . . Those that get their living by their daily labour have nothing to stir them up to be serviceable but their wants, which it is prudence to relieve, but folly to cure.'**
>
> BERNARD DE MANDEVILLE, *The Fable of the Bees*, 1728.
>
> **'Are the poor necessary?'**
>
> Question posed by MR DESMOND WILCOX, 'Man Alive', BBC TV, February 21, 1973.

March 19, 1973

British political conditions are fast getting back to square one. British capitalism, though far from bankrupt in the sense of profit at home and tribute from abroad, nevertheless is sliding deeper into the crisis it has been keeping at bay for the past half century—always at the expense of the working people. Today the issues are stark. The grey areas (the nonsense of 'affluence', the 'never-had-it-so-good' smoke-screen, the hey-day of right-wing social democratic illusions) are giving way to black and white realities. There have been times when, for some, illusions seemed more real than realities. At one time, colonial exploitation and British financial dominance were believed by many to provide a timeless, preordained cushion for the British ruling class against the economic facts which others fell headlong over. Now, the Government's many-pronged attack on the working people and their organisations shows once again that inter-capitalist rivalries and the declining position of the British economy in the world scene make necessary a battle involving basic class strengths in Britain. It comes back to exploitation and the role of exploitation.

Who are the 'Poor'?

Two hundred and fifty years ago, de Mandeville set down with clarity the scenario for the working people, written for the leaders of the 'rich nations'. The 'poor' had the quite simple duty of carrying the rich on their backs. Theirs was the role of being 'serviceable'. It was then; it is now. 'Are the poor necessary?' asked Mr Wilcox

* RPD is at present in hospital for treatment of varicose ulcers, but is confident of being able to resume the 'Notes' in the May issue.

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at the end of his programme which brought out the glaring and widening differences between the two ends of the social scale in Britain, 1973. He might as well have asked the question about air, light or water. For how can there be profits, and how can there be rich, unless there are 'serviceable' poor to batten off? How can the monopolies reach ever-greater heights of super-exploitation if money needed by working class families at home to live on, and wealth needed by emergent nations abroad to build their countries, is not taken into profit columns, salted into reserves, reinvested for the maximum return? The poor are not just necessary, they are indispensable to a system based on exploitation.

Who are the 'poor' we are talking about? They are not those (the aged, the sick, the homeless) who are in the depths of poverty. We are referring quite simply to those that work, and are thereby exploited. On Mr Wilcox's programme the poor were represented by a hospital worker and his family, with a basic pay level of about £21 a week. Just as de Mandeville was not referring to the impoverished, but to 'those that get their living by their daily labour', so are we. The poor consist of all who are deprived, who create more wealth for capitalism than they get in return, who produce surplus value for a class which lives on rent, interest and profit. Today, the all-pervading grip of monopoly extracts its vast wealth from those earning not just £20 a week but £30, £40 or more. It hires them, it uses them, it fires them as necessary (there are no more cradle-to-grave jobs; insecurity is the lot of all workers). Hence the monopolists create, in traditional grave-digging style, the ever-widening class which will destroy them. As Marx commented:

> A rise in the price of labour, as a consequence of accumulation of capital, only means, in fact, that the length and weight of the golden chain the wage-worker has already forged for himself, allow of a relaxation of the tension of it.
> (*Capital*, Vol. 1, Chapter XXV, Section I)

But the chain remains. And a waning capitalism can scarce now afford to let it get longer or lighter. The essential feature today is that monopoly crushes the whole of society outside of itself. And the working people are learning.

The Condition of the People

With exploitation currently so vast and blatant, the charade-making apparatus of the state and its agencies works at full blast to confuse the people and disguise reality. Facts are twisted and figures

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manipulated to persuade people that living standards in general are being maintained, even improved. General illiteracy and the cost of printed matter in de Mandeville's day allowed him—speaking to a select few—to tell the unvarnished truth. Even Disraeli felt able to write *Sybil—or The Two Nations* dealing with real issues of nineteenth-century capitalism. Today, politicians with little faith in the stability of their system go to extraordinary lengths to distort reality. Heath creates more inequality after promising to work towards 'one nation', and the cover-up job goes on night and day. Thus, in the House of Commons on February 22, John Nott—a junior Treasury Minister—was asked how much the pound, taken at 100p in June 1970, when the Tories came to power, was now worth. This merchant bank executive and former President of the Cambridge Union, delivered himself of the following:

> It is 81½p or a fall of 0.6p per month. This compares with a rise in personal disposable incomes in the third quarter of 1972 of 1p per month, which gives a rise in the standard of living of the British people at almost double the rate of 1964-70.

And this was only surpassed by the *Times*, which headed its report the following day: 'Standard of living has almost doubled'! Let them tell that to the gas workers and others in dispute. But Mr Nott should know that the third quarter of 1972 has nothing to do with nearly two years' decline in the value of money, and that 'personal disposable incomes', including as they do the inflated wealth available to the rich, are no measure of working class spending power. The *Times* takes the distortion a mile further—but there are better witnesses of the people's condition, and on February 28 the London *Evening Standard* interviewed one of them. Asked why he was on strike for the first time in his life, 62-year-old Mr Joe Cooke (assistant clerical officer in the Customs House at Heathrow) explained: a 7 per cent rise two years ago gave him £1,570 a year. Since then his council house rent had gone up £1.40 a week, fares to work up £1.20 a week, and since decimalisation his wife's groceries cost £2 a week more. All told, he was paying out over £5 a week more than two years ago. He went on:

> I used to keep £6 a week for myself out of my pay packet. That was my spending money. The rest I gave to my wife. She pays all the bills, the rent, the food, the light and the gas. Today, I keep just £2 a week for myself. It's enough to keep me in tobacco. The days when I could have a pint of beer and a game of snooker have gone. There's no hope of me ever taking my wife

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> out for a meal—a thing we used to do quite often at weekends. *On my wage today, life for me has become one monotonous routine—work and travel to work, with just enough money to live on* [emphasis added].

That was why Joe Cooke was among the over 200,000 Civil Servants to take the first major industrial action in their history: on strike as the gas workers continued their action; as London teachers walked out; just 24 hours before the locomen stopped the trains in the first of their actions; a few days before the hospital ancillary workers struck (and the nurses demanded a better deal); and a few days before walk-outs and other actions started throughout the Ford empire. If you multiply Joe Cooke's case ('life for me has become one monotonous routine . . .') many thousand times, the reason behind the strikes becomes apparent. It is significant how similar were the feelings he expressed to those of the miners during their victorious strike last year (as is the same widespread public sympathy). They declared that if their pay was to be the reward for a working life spent underground, then the pits could rot. 'Let *them* cut the bloody coal,' as one put it. Our latter-day Tory propagandists would have us believe that women working in pits or children working in mills was exploitation—but that an anaemic, under-paid, insecure existence today is not. They should consider, when weighing up the Civil Servants' action, that in the 1926 general strike it was not even considered politic to call on them to take action. The people are learning.

Attack via Taxation

As fresh today as ever, de Mandeville's homily to the rich would provide a perfect preamble to the Chancellor's budget, the Industrial Relations Act, the various phases of the Government's freeze, or its recent defence estimates (£3,365 million to be spent in 1973-74—an increase of 5½ per cent in real terms in the wealth diverted from the people's pay into arms and forces). The budget, advertised as 'neutral', is in fact only the first instalment of the measures planned by the Government this year. It is the manipulation of the cards before the audience is invited to 'find the lady'—and risk losing its shirt. The 'popular' press portrayed this price-raising budget through the image of the children's lollypop price drop, but their columns will soon be forced to treat the public reaction to its real class character. Its main provisions in fact continue the process (described in detail by Michael Meacher MP in our December issue) whereby taxation is being cut for the richer at the expense of the poorer

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sections of the community. The already-heralded elimination of surtax gives a £300 million a year hand-out to those with high—and often unearned—incomes, while the insufficient pensions increases (not until October, by which time prices will have risen still further) will keep the aged poor firmly in their place.

VAT—Worse than a Poll Tax

Value Added Tax, one of the blessings bestowed on us by our entry into the Common Market, carries out the same pernicious process with indirect taxation that the abolition of surtax does for direct taxation: it switches the burden further towards the poorer sections. Purchase tax, which it replaces, at least contained an element of Britain's traditional progressive taxation principle, giving different rates of tax according to the type of goods. VAT, whose overall effect will be to decrease tax on the more luxury-type goods, and increase it on more basic necessities which—for social reasons—carried little or no tax, introduces the most regressive form of tax into retail trading. And, with the abolition later in the year of the sugar subsidy and the bacon stabilising payments, we shall be another stage nearer the wiping out of Britain's long-held cheap food policy. Food prices rose by 10 per cent in the year to January 1973 and again, while the poor are hit the hardest, the vast majority of wage and salary earners are also hurt.

A 'Dear Money' Policy

Financial and property speculators are encouraged by the budget to go on making their millions. In fact, it gives investors a new Government stock worth £1,000 million, carrying an interest rate of 9 per cent (thus extracting a further £90 million a year from our pockets). This is convertible, in 1980, into a further 9 per cent stock to mature in the year 2000. Thus the Government makes clear its intention that usurious interest rates are to be the order of the day for capitalist Britain until at least the end of the century. They call it a 'dear money' policy, and how apt. Immediately after the budget, the building societies were again considering putting up their interest rates in the light of the new National Savings issue (maximum holding £10,000, interest up from 7 to 8½ per cent), arguing that their rates must be equally attractive to the large, parasitic investors. Once more 'those that get their living by their daily labour' will foot the bill through higher monthly mortgage payments.

Parasitism

This financial parasitism, which has accompanied the growth of

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monopoly particularly in the past decade or so, has many forms. High interest rates on hire purchase, mortgages and all forms of direct borrowing, bite at first hand; countless millions more have been and are being made through land speculation which increases the cost of houses, raises rents and rockets the price of land needed for schools, hospitals and other public works (paid for through rates and taxes); it has moved into the retail trade through the monopoly chains with their ability to exclude smaller concerns by paying fantastic sums for High Street shops and premises and passing the cost on in their prices (some even leasing shops from their own property companies, thus gaining as monopoly retailer and property owner). At every turn, purchasing power is sucked from people's pockets by the money-lenders. They call the result 'inflation'—and blame it on to the trade unions. But the facts belie them. The Joe Cookes of this world are paying too extortionate an amount each week in a hundred ways to the usurers. And even this aspect is now making headlines in some of the papers. On February 25, the Editor of the *Sunday Times* Business News lifted a corner of the curtain usually drawn across the whole topic. An article headed 'Another £1 a week out of your pocket' started thus:

> Rising interest rates, which have accelerated in recent weeks because of the Bank of England's efforts to curb the money supply, have now become a major inflationary element in their own right. Increases already made over the past 12 months could lead to a staggering £1 a week rise on the cost of living for British families, and there could be worse to follow.

The building societies are already working on the 'worse to follow,' apart from the other sections of capitalism which have their sights fixed on yet higher prices. At that rate, what price the Government's '£1 plus 4 per cent' pay rises?

Who Speaks Out?

So where must we look for the voices crying out against this Government-monopoly attack? Where does the fight-back against inflation and its robbery stem from? Only from those active in the trade union and labour movement, and such allies as the movement can win to its side in the course of the battle (such as the small shopkeepers, who are also milked from morning to night by the monopolies). There have been enough examples of runaway inflation over the past 50 years and more for the ruling class to know the dangers of the situation for their system. (The *Sunday Telegraph*

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Editor is aware of at least one danger. His leader-writer on March 11 wrote: 'Inflation makes socialists of us all, which is one of its worst dangers'.) But the ruling class sees only one solution: to solve the crisis by making the people pay, the classic capitalist answer through the years. Hence the Government attack, in the hope of cutting living standards, depressing consumption, cheapening production (either relative to other countries or absolutely) and increasing exports. It all comes back again to increased exploitation. Just ten years ago the *Times* itself felt constrained to speak out against the same process. On July 4, 1963 (a month after the Profumo resignation, following also the Rachmanite scandals), it carried a much-acclaimed leading article entitled 'After Affluence', meant as a warning to the Tory Party. It said in part:

> Sensible and serious Conservatives . . . know all is not well with the picture Conservatism has presented in the past decade. . . . The kind of affluence that all too much of Conservatism has seemed to encourage has been the pursuit of money for its own sake, the acquisition of wealth with the least effort and by whatever means are handiest, the jealous protection of capital gains at a time of the firm control of wages. . . .

The intensification of the crisis sapping Britain's economy got under way seriously with the scrapping of wartime controls during the Tories' 13 years of rule from 1951 ('Setting the people free . . .': how we are paying for that slogan). It continues today in an aggravated form. But the *Times* cannot reprint its 1963 message now, for the rot has gone too far, the parasites are too powerful, and their main concern is precisely 'the jealous protection of capital gains at a time of the firm control of wages'. Ten years ago the public was sickened by reports of property racketeers who tore up people's floorboards, threw snakes into their rooms and smashed their windows to make them sell at the 'right' price. These were the amateurs, feeding off the early beginnings of property speculation and the capital gains racket. Today, using subtler means, the banks, building societies, property companies and monopolies in all spheres have multiplied the extortion a thousand times. The multi-storey Centre Point office block is left empty and unused in London, able to accrue more value as a mere shell to satisfy the interests which had it built. But acres of slums remain, and unemployment and poverty abound. So one has to look to the active, fighting forces throughout the labour movement, the trade union activists, the left-Labour and Communists to provide the counter-force to ensure that this time the burden will not be carried by the working people.

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The TUC's document, *Economic Policy and Collective Bargaining in 1973*, acts as a timely warning about the care with which trade unionists should scrutinise all statements concerning pay and inflation. It points out that pay makes up only 40 per cent of consumer prices (i.e. 10 per cent on pay gives 4 per cent on prices, assuming productivity stays the same). Between the second quarters of 1971 and 1972, wages and salaries rose by 11 per cent; productivity, however, rose by 5 per cent overall (8 per cent in production industries); thus unit labour costs rose by about 6 per cent, giving a maximum effect on consumer prices of 2.4 per cent. Yet, it points out, prices rose by 7 per cent in the period. It also gives details of the taxation swindle of recent decades (part of the miners' case last year): the average manual worker paid very little tax in 1950, lost 8 per cent of his pay in tax in 1960—but by 1970 was paying out nearly 18 per cent. So does the Government cut living standards in ways which are totally concealed from those who swallow the arguments based solely on the Cost of Living Index. Many aspects of the document are well worth study and wide discussion among all trade union members.

Organising the Counter-Attack

There is heartening evidence now that a new understanding and a new mood is coming over the people. It appears in the reaction of people at large to those who are in battle (notwithstanding the considerable public inconvenience that many of the actions are causing) and in the reaction inside the trade union movement itself to the Government's attack. The hysterical abuse presented in the press about those on strike, has not prevented the growth of widespread sympathy for gasmen, hospital workers and others, and has failed to create the anti-trade union atmosphere it aimed at. The Government's phony Pay Board (run, of course, by a £16,000 a year chairman) is not taking a trick. Thus, though many of the sections in struggle are quite new to strike action, sustaining them as they gain experience is their firm conviction that what they are doing is right, added to the widespread support lying behind them. The evidence of deep-going changes in the trade union movement gives every ground for hope. The Special TUC contained the healthiest indications that an ebb-tide is flowing for the right-wing. There was the foreseen danger in a recall TUC that a document would be presented whose analysis of the current situation would be totally let down by a lack of proposals for an active, fighting policy which would give a lead to the movement. The primary

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right-wing design was to have a talking session—and then have it all left to the leadership. This tactic was supplemented by the presentation of stark, extreme alternatives to the delegates: either an all-out general strike against the Government, or 'let's sit down and talk to Whitehall' (in other words, capitulate). These were presented as the only possible alternatives, but the delegates saw through that one and, in the very difficult situation created by the original tactics of the leadership, produced a formula for action. Had the original TUC arrangements provided for motions to be submitted, debated and decided on, a more ordered meeting could have been held, possibly taking things further. But the outcome was in any case excellent. It is worth recalling the eventual motion, passed overwhelmingly:

> Congress calls upon the General Council to organise and lead co-ordinated action in support of affiliated unions in dispute and who require such support.
>
> Congress also calls upon the General Council, as part of a determined campaign, to invite affiliated unions to join in a day of national protest and stoppage against the wage control policy and increase in food prices. This to be organised as quickly as possible.

'Co-ordinated action in support of affiliated unions in dispute', a day of stoppage and protest 'as part of a determined campaign' against wage control and rising prices. These give a wealth of scope within which the movement can launch massive action against the freeze. But it will have to be fought for. Pressure at every point will be necessary to impress on the leadership the views of the rank and file, to indicate the forms of struggle which grass roots discussion throws up, and to give the backing at each stage which will allow a serious and broad campaign to be developed. Important in this respect is the national conference called for March 31 by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, which will discuss just these issues.

Anti-Monopoly Front

So where do we stand in the fast-moving situation of Spring 1973? On the one side, the monopolies and Government are in full cry, attacking at every point. On the other, the movement is responding, and itself developing in the course of the battle. New sections are taking the field. Where, then, does the key to the situation lie? It lies in the response to the fact that a quantitative change, by the growth of monopoly, is fast turning into a qualitative change due to its impact on the living standards and the freedoms of the British people. A few figures: the 100 largest manufacturing companies,

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which in 1909 accounted for 15 per cent of Britain's net output, enlarged their grip to 38 per cent in 1963 and to some 50 per cent by 1970; the massive spate of take-overs and mergers (gathering momentum since the late 1950s) has transformed both the manufacturing and retailing scene, such that in 1972 companies to the value of £2,509 million were taken over—an all-time record. The monopolies are getting ever more powerful, and the state, which feeds them and which they support, is operating ever more openly on their behalf. Add to this also the rapid growth of the multinational companies—often more powerful in financial terms than the Governments in whose countries they operate, and which everywhere add an aspect of national independence to the working class battle. We have an apparent growth in the strength of capitalism —but with fatal weaknesses which force it to attack the interests of the working class and expose its true character more clearly each day. So the battle lines become sharper, with the parasitic exploiters becoming ever more isolated and in clear view. The political bedrock is being fast laid down for the development of the broadest possible anti-monopoly alliance. The monopolies feed off all, without exception, outside their own ranks, making the class interests of all working people identical, and making possible the forging of stronger unity throughout the working class movement. None can blind themselves to the difficulties, as the right-wing play their traditional role of sowing divisions in the movement, and the Parliamentary Labour Party fails to reflect the strengthening character of the trade unions. The trade union struggle is focusing attention on the need for unity and the need to end any sectional disunity between workers, or rifts caused by political bans or proscriptions. There is no room now for illusions as to the seriousness of the situation. The battle the British people are moving into is one of win or lose, one which will decide who is to be the hammer and who the anvil in the harsh economic and political times lying ahead. The Government, backed by all the forces of reaction, are aware of this and are pursuing a class strategy by which they aim to gain the ascendancy. Their allies on the right of the movement, ever aware of their role, are working to dampen the struggle, to sow doubts and confusions. Thus there is the need to mobilise every worker, to use every ounce of working class strength, to set every organisation in action, to gather all the forces behind those in the front line. The keenest test is at hand and its outcome will influence the political and economic face of Britain for years to come. Who will be the hammer? Who will be the anvil?

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Special TUC—1

A DECISION TO BUILD ON

Alan Sapper
General Secretary
Association of Cinematograph, Television and allied Technicians

THE Special Congress of the TUC on March 5 was the third one in the history of the movement. However, it was only after concerted pressure that the Congress was held at all. A great deal of discussion and debate took place on the General Council before a decision was overwhelmingly taken to convene the Congress as soon as practicable.

March 5 acted as the watershed between talks and action. The research staff at Congress House prepared a comprehensive document, *Economic Policy and Collective Bargaining in 1973*, for ratification by General Council members. The document analysed the causes of inflation and the ills of our economic system but proposed very little practical resolution to the situation. The final form of this document which had been materially amended by General Council members still lacked positive, practical measures that the movement could take. Paragraph 116 of the Report demonstrates this point:

> Affiliated unions are and always have been free to seek advice and support from the General Council when faced by a problem whether in negotiations or otherwise. If a union makes such an approach to the General Council, in the context of guidelines of the TUC in relation to problems encountered as a consequence of the application of the Government's pay policy, the General Council will examine its request in the light of the circumstances and merits of the particular case.

It was understood that Vic Feather would be explicitly explaining to Congress the interpretation of this vague paragraph and the General Council decided, in view of this, that it could not, or would not, press for standing orders of Congress accepting amendments to the report or motions to be moved.

However, the rank and file trade union movement had other ideas: resolutions up and down the country were pressing for the TUC to take a lead. It has been the pattern in past years for the rank and file movement to be ahead of the TUC and this has caused unnecessary divisions in the labour movement. Indeed, this Special

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Congress tested the balance of forces in the TUC, and that is why the decision of Congress to move the reference back was so important.

It firstly maintained the tremulous validity of the movement's leadership, and demonstrated the depth of feeling of the delegates representing the rank and file members. The fact was that the General Council was totally surprised by the success of the reference back, and avoided by the narrowest of margins adjourning Congress completely. Once Congress was resumed, it was made clear to the meeting that resolutions would be accepted by the Standing Orders Committee, signed either by the General Secretary or President of the Unions, and these would be considered by the General Council during the lunch break. It was apparent that Vic Feather's introduction to the report didn't go far enough, for, of the resolutions received, the majority were calling for leadership of industrial action.

Some quick compositing took place, which produced two main resolutions, the key one of which called upon the General Council to organise and lead co-ordinated action in support of affiliated unions in dispute and who required such support; and, as part of a determined campaign, to invite affiliated unions to join in a day of national protest and stoppage against the wage control policy and increase in food prices, to be organised as quickly as possible.

It was made quite clear by the mover and seconder—Harry Urwin of the Transport and General Workers' Union and George Doughty of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers—that this should be no ordinary campaign. This industrial action, the first political action called by the TUC, should be the beginning of a continual and growing pressure against Government policies. The acceptance by Congress of the resolution was a clear demonstration that the dog was wagging its own tail. The movement must now ensure that it is carried out in practical terms. Time is not on our side; the TUC must take this practical leadership and use it as a springboard for still further activity. The mineworkers proved by their tremendous victory last year that going, as Joe Gormley said, 'the whole hog' was the only way to win.

We can no longer rely on reports, excellent or poor, on tea-party type discussions, or even eye-ball to eye-ball confrontation across a varnished table. The movement must use its industrial strength, as the Government and the employers always do. We must swap punches against redundancies, industrial closures, high food prices, high rents, unrestricted inflation and profiteering, by clearly stating that we, the working class, make everything possible and therefore can make many things impossible.

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Questions are being asked in every part of the country: 'Where do we go to from here?' It is easy to say: 'Well, this is up to the movement to decide'; the movement has certainly decided, in that resolution, the way they wish to go but it now has to be supported by ever-increasing activity, at local and divisional meetings, for the TUC to step up the campaign, using the resolution for its reference; using the practical examples of the gas industry, the hospital services, and the railways, as pointers.

For, if it does not take full advantage of the new mandate, it will once again be cushioned into impotency by bundles of documentation and hot air. The struggle must be a wide and all-embracing one, and this includes concern and action about the shockingly biased media. Indeed, since the exposure of the bias in television, concerning industrial disputes, there has been a temporary improvement, but by no means a correction. Night after night on newscast programmes biased statements are given, sequences of the interview are transmitted, attacking and vilifying striking members of our movement; and yet no real equal opportunity is given for the trade unions to answer back and explain the reason for the point made. It must be apparent that the propaganda machine, so successfully used by Goebbels in Nazi Germany, with only film and press and radio at his disposal, is now fifty times more effective via television. The general strike in 1926 supposedly took place against the background of the neutral BBC. It still is not understood enough that one of the major weapons in the class war is communication.

We, as a movement, must stake our claim. If not for control in the first instance, at least for equal exposure on television and this doesn't mean to say a ten-minute statement at ten past six in the evening, or a shop steward on the picket line outside the factory or hospital, but it means a side-by-side equal time and presentation of the trade union view and voice. Unless we achieve equality in a true media sense, every practical action taken will be totally distorted and used against us; and therefore, integrated with the determined campaign agreed in the resolution, there must be a confrontation by the TUC with the broadcasting authorities to achieve the movement's access to the media. It must also pursue in a more determined manner with the newspaper industry a comprehensive regulation of the vilification that often appears, and compensation by equal space.

The Special Congress did indeed act as a watershed: it exploded the myth that the General Council is always in the grip of reactionary forces. It is Congress that dictates the mandate for the General

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Council to follow. The General Council is not an island protected from the organised working class. It is up to every individual trade unionist to play an active part in his or her union structure in order to influence the motions for the agenda of Congress, and to construct resolutions for their own Executives.

It is no good complaining of inactivity and of treachery, when tens of thousands of members of all trade unions stay at home and watch television which is feeding them distortion. The stream is flowing our way, but at the moment sluggishly. Unity has to be fought for, and then that fight must be continued to maintain the unity. We must not forget the Special Congress's decision and we must create a ferment of organised activity to confront the Government's legislation with *the* weapon, our own industrial strength!

The More Things Change . . .

This cartoon appeared in *Plebs*, the monthly magazine then campaigning for independent working class education based on Marxism, in February 1919. It was a time of great post-war struggles, beginning as economic disputes but rapidly developing into confrontation with the largely Tory Government. Since September 1918, hundreds of thousands of miners, shipyard workers, engineers and others had struck for higher wages, largely under the leadership of shop stewards —who were fiercely denounced by politicians and newspapers as disrupters of the economy. In January 1919, tens of thousands of soldiers had gone on strike too in Britain, against delay in demobilisation (war with Germany was over, but the Government, moved by its insensate hatred of Soviet Russia, wanted to keep huge forces in being to fight the 'Red threat to Europe'). A reactionary majority in the House of Commons had recently rejected self-determination for all Ireland. . . .

The lessons of this situation were obvious to all socialists. But the trade union movement and the Labour Party were dominated by those for whom 'the political, social and economic emancipation of the people' and 'common ownership of the means of production'— adopted as the aims of the Labour Party at a special conference on February 26, 1918—only meant continuing capitalist rule under another name. And they backed the capitalist system against the rebellious workers.

Andrew Rothstein

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The Lookers-on (to Labour): '*Some* burden, undoubtedly, my good fellow. But for goodness' sake don't drop him until you are sure what you are going to put in his place!'

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Special TUC—2

HOW THE 'TEETH' WERE PUT IN

H. S. Lloyd
President
National Society of Operative Printers
Graphical and Media Personnel

THE Trades Union Congress is planning a day of national protest strike and demonstration against the Government's pay and prices policy and is to give support to unions falling foul of the pay limits following the emergency TUC on March 5.

The aim of many union leaders was to ensure the TUC's anti-Government policy had 'teeth', as Mr Jack Jones of the Transport Workers put it.

The pressure from the trade union movement for a special Congress to be held was always based on the idea that a decision should be sought which would provide for definite unified industrial action against the Government's policies with regard to the Industrial Relations Act and the wage freeze operative through Phase II—'The Programme for Controlling Inflation: Second Stage'—and prospective Phase III. Certainly the struggle within the General Council had resulted in the indefinite paragraph 116 of the report, *Economic Policy and Collective Bargaining in 1973*, which in turn had reflected the right-wing domination of the Finance and General Purposes and Economic Committees of the General Council.

When the reference back of this report was moved by Joe Gormley of the National Union of Mineworkers, and finally put to the vote and carried by 5.1 million to 4.3 million votes, the underestimation by a majority of the General Council of the upsurge within the trade union movement against the Government restrictions threw the General Council into confusion. Whatever the objectives of Joe Gormley were, he was probably as much surprised as anyone at the outcome. He seemed to be saying publicly that the call for a general strike was unreal and that those who were issuing the call were bluffing and that their bluff should be called by the Government opting for a general election.

So it may have been that it was an attempt to clear the situation up at Congress. The decision, however, quickly led to a wider discussion than perhaps the General Council had intended. Certainly Vic

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Feather was expected fully to elucidate paragraph 116 to the point of assuring the delegates that the General Council would be willing to go as far as they went with the mineworkers, the railwaymen and the imprisoned dockers, given a definite action that might lead up to similar situations to those which developed with the miners and the imprisonment of the dockers, when there was the possibility of a 24-hour stoppage against the Government's restrictive laws.

The mood of Congress showed little support for those who were seeking accommodations with the Government, and the votes for the composite resolution moved by the Transport and General Workers' Union and seconded by the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (Technical Section) decided the issue, which was in turn the outcome of the tabling to the General Council of 12 emergency resolutions that followed the reference back moved by the mineworkers. The miners' resolution hardly reflected the speech of Joe Gormley, merely calling for the affiliated organisations to consult their members with a view to taking national industrial action to force the Government either (a) to change its policy on wage restrictions, or (b) to call a general election. Whilst there appeared to be no fear among the majority of the Congress delegates about the calling of a general election, some speakers indicating they would welcome such an event, the wording of the mineworkers' proposal was pale against the speeches made by the mover of the reference back, and it was a contradiction of the criticism of paragraph 116 which, when explained later by Vic Feather, showed that the majority of the General Council were willing to go as far as apparently Joe Gormley was.

So what Congress did as a result anyway of the successful moving back was to adopt a resolution late in the day that the General Council should organise and lead co-ordinated action in support of affiliated unions already in dispute and who required such support, *and* to embark upon a determined campaign and to invite affiliated unions to indulge in a day of national protest and stoppage against the wage control policy and—most important of all—against the increases in food prices.

The successful motion asked that this should be organised as quickly as possible by the General Council. Protests were made by the Electrical Electronic Telecommunication Union and dire misgivings voiced by spokesmen for the Union of Post Office Workers, but it is clear that the door has been opened for the campaign to be developed for a day of protest and stoppage taking the form of a general strike, in my view, for May 1.

The mood of Congress was decisively displayed by the support

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that was given to the speeches by Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones and others who had called for something more than a policy of finding alternatives to Government proposals. The day seemed to release all the pent-up criticism of the pussyfooting with the Government in the Downing Street comings and goings and the Chequers meetings, and, although Hugh Scanlon defended this as being based on positive action to expose the Government's perfidy in regard to their policies, the mood of Congress was sharply opposed to such meetings.

LABOUR MONTHLY FIFTY YEARS AGO

Forty years ago Marx died. His anniversary is being celebrated in a fashion that he would have understood. The suicidal frenzy of capitalist civilisation with its great powers reduced by years of protracted conflict to futile plunder raids; the world economic paralysis creeping on winter by winter without cure; the growing hold and consolidation of the forces of revolution around the first proletarian state: all this would have been to Marx in 1883 the filling up of the outlines of a picture already seen, although to any other mind at that apex of victorious prosperity it would have seemed the maunderings of a nightmare. The rapidity of the transformation of human society through which we are living, and the character of which Marx first perceived, is its most striking external characteristic. A hundred years from Marx's birth saw the first proletarian revolution and proletarian state. Will a hundred years from his death see the World Proletarian Republic?

What is the secret of this power of Marx which makes him today so close to the living reality of events? The world history today which is confounding all the conventional thinkers is Marxism alive. There was no need to refute his critics. History refutes them.

(From 'Notes of the Month—Marx and the Modern World', by R.P.D., *Labour Monthly*, April 1923)

TIM BUCK (1890-1973)

Tim Buck's death is a loss to the labour and trade union movement: in Canada, the country he made his home and to which he devoted his years of activity, in Britain and throughout the world. His articles in *Labour Monthly* included *Canada* (1947) and *Canada and the US Python* (1954).

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NORTHERN IRELAND

Betty Sinclair*

THE Border Poll of March 8 revealed little change in the balance of forces, Unionist and anti-Unionist, over the past four and a half years. If anything, the anti-Unionist element who voted for joining the Irish Republic and those who abstained was well over the usual third of the electorate. The result of the poll was as follows:

To remain as part of the UK	591,820
To join with the Irish Republic	6,463
Spoiled votes	5,973
Total electorate	1,031,633
Abstention vote	427,377

Of those who were eligible to vote, the percentage for the Union was 57.5. But no one had any illusions about the conduct of the poll. The anti-Unionists boycotted the poll. There were few persons other than Unionists inside the polling stations. Allegations were rife about 'stuffing the boxes'. William Deedes, British Tory MP, admitted in his article in the *Sunday Telegraph* (March 11) that the returning officers, poll clerks and observers (Unionists) had an 'astonishingly close acquaintance with the voters'. He went on to say that 'observers' were 'unusually' allowed inside the polling stations and 'often worked alongside the poll clerks.' What Deedes did not make clear to the readers was that the 'observers' were persons working in the Unionist interest. They were breaking the electoral law, and the poll officials, responsible for the conduct of the poll, condoned these breaches. It will be clear that the Border Poll was a sop to the ultra-Unionists and a further exercise in sectarian politics. Anything the Unionist regime could do in this wise, the Whitelaw one could do better—with the aid of 33,000 armed forces!

The poll has revealed nothing that was not known except that the anti-Unionist front, which has suffered much from harassment from the British Army and the sectarian murders of workers, still rejects any return of a Stormont Unionist administration whatever might be the wishes of the Heath Government and those in Northern Ireland who would cry 'quits' at any price.

In the camp of the Unionists, who welcomed the poll results, there are serious doubts about the intentions of the British Government and fears that they may have delivered themselves over to accepting

* This article was written before the publication of the White Paper.

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solutions not in accord with their demands. Since the inception of direct rule in March 1972, Whitelaw has been seeking a 'moderate centre' from the Unionist and anti-Unionist camps. So far he has been unsuccessful. William Craig MP, leader of the Ulster Loyalist Council, who has taken part in talks with MPs of the Social Democrat and Labour Party, stated after the poll that 'loyalists would not accept a solution that did not bring cabinet government,' and 'they were not prepared to accept a situation which did not restore to a Stormont parliament control of security.' Faulkner, more cautious, stands wondering when, and where, to jump. If the anti-Unionists have rejected Stormont rule by the Unionists, it can be assumed that the Unionists do not relish rule by Westminster.

The latest effort to capture the leadership of the Unionist forces, and a few days before the expected publication of the White Paper, has come from the Rev Ian Paisley MP, leader of the Democratic (*sic*) Unionist Party and Capt L. P. S. Orr, leader of the Unionist MPs at Westminster, who called a meeting of all the organisations of the 'loyalists', and have put forward the following demands: defeat of the IRA, no Council of Ireland unless the Republic recognises the Constitution of Northern Ireland (i.e. the Government of Ireland Act, 1920), restoration of the Northern Ireland parliament or full integration with Britain, and local control of the police. Faulkner, still leader of the Unionist Party and at variance with Orr for some time, who was subject to very strong opposition from Paisley when he was Prime Minister—'Faulkner must go'—was 'invited' to attend the meeting.

The Green Paper, issued after the Darlington Talks of last September, contained the guide-lines for the White Paper. In Paragraph 74 the terms were clearly laid down of accepting the link with Britain. It was stated:

> So long as Northern Ireland remains part of the United Kingdom, the United Kingdom parliament must be the sovereign authority over all persons, matters and things in Northern Ireland, and the ultimate acceptance of that authority must be a necessary condition of the financial economic and military assistance from which Northern Ireland benefits as part of the United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom Government was said to have major concerns in Northern Ireland (para 74):

> First, it [Northern Ireland] should be internally at peace—a divided and strife-ridden province is bound to disturb and weaken the whole Kingdom. Secondly, that it should prosper, so as to contribute to and not detract from

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> the prosperity of the whole. Thirdly, that Northern Ireland should not offer a base for any external threat to the security of the United Kingdom. In pursuing these objectives, the Government will wish to consider at all times the views and interests in Northern Ireland and take them *as fully as possible* into account [emphasis added].

Both the Irish and Northern Ireland 'dimensions' will be required to be completely subordinate to the United Kingdom 'dimension', and supplement the role of Britain inside the Common Market. For the Irish capitalist class this may be a matter of easy agreement as more and more British and other foreign countries establish their ascendancy in industry and commerce, North and South, through their multi-national corporations, banks, hire purchase and insurance companies, building societies, the United Stock Exchange (since last June embracing all stock exchanges in Britain and Ireland), and the united working which has been established between the Confederation of Irish Industry and the Northern Ireland branch of the Confederation of British Industry. David Howell, Minister of State for Northern Ireland, was reported as saying that the 'border will mean little in the economic sense in the context of Europe.' And so big business, with Britain as the dominant partner, will accept a White Paper which lays down the framework to carry this 'partnership' forward into the future.

There will be no attempt, or wish, to end the political divisions deliberately created over many years between the common people in the North, or between such people North and South: economic unity in favour of the multi-national corporations, and disunity between the manual and professional workers so that the latter will never be strong enough to fight their class enemies at home or challenge the role of British imperialism in Ireland.

Direct rule, now extended for another year, was welcomed by the 'political infants' who thought that there would be ushered in an era of 'British justice'. These hopes were shortlived and remain only in the breasts of the Northern Ireland Labour and Alliance Parties who are actuated by a despair that the people of Northern Ireland will ever be able to come together to work out solutions in their interests. The Whitelaw administration proceeded to govern with the aid of all the repressive legislation instituted by the Unionists. The weapon of internment was retained and reinforced by the Detention of Terrorists Order—*passed by the Westminster parliament*; 'Operation Motorman', to open up the no-go areas of the anti-Unionists, was carried out last July and no action was taken against the para-military forces that were growing up on the Unionist right.

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The British armed forces gave little or no protection to Catholic families and business people who lost their homes and livelihoods. (A spokesman of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive estimated that 20,000 families have moved in the past three and a half years—mostly Catholic families.)

The progressive forces have called for a Bill of Rights to protect all citizens, and this has been supported by the British and Irish Trades Union Congresses. Over 750 persons have been killed since August 1969, and most of those deaths have occurred in the first year of direct rule. It was also in that year that sectarian assassinations of workers took place, which now total more than 120.

Whilst money has been poured in to maintain the security forces and assist big business (mostly British) no steps have been taken to introduce any democratic reforms. What disheartens progressive forces in Ireland is the almost total acceptance by the Labour Opposition at Westminster of British Tory policy in Ireland, and especially in the North. How can the Labour Opposition accept such undemocratic rule for any section of the United Kingdom? If they accept such for 1½ million people in Northern Ireland, it will be an easy step towards accepting the same conditions for 55 million people in Britain—especially when the call for (Tory) 'law and order' becomes more rampant. British military wallahs who deal with the theory and practice of military rule and the new ideas of 'urban guerrilla warfare', look upon Northern Ireland as a training ground for possible future eventualities if and when the people of Britain begin to roll the bosses off their backs. The dangers are very great.

The workers are fighting back. Through the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), the local District Committee of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, the Belfast Trades Union Council and the excellent lead given by the 250-strong conference of representatives of the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union, serious efforts are being made to win all workers away from sectarian activities and ideologies and to establish a strong working class leadership. Movements of tenants' associations are building up to cut the sectarian divide. Social problems, the legacy of half a century of Unionist neglect, are being tackled in a more determined way and were much in evidence at the historic conference of 400 representatives from 60 organisations which was called by the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trades Unions on March 3.

The will is growing for working class unity. This will can grow if the correct setting is provided. The White Paper, unless it contains

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the pattern for democratic rights for all—from Unionists to Republicans—will only hold back the struggle. The people of Northern Ireland must be provided with the framework that will enable them to make good the destruction that has been caused, the total cost of which could reach over £100 million; to end the unemployment and slums which have been a root cause of all the dissension; to end a political set-up that can only be maintained by a perpetuation of sectarianism; and, in the words of the ICTU resolution, which 'accepts the right of persons peacefully to advocate political change, including changes in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland.'

In these grim days that lie before us, we look to the British trade union and labour movement for assistance. We are both ranged against the same Tory Government. We are both fighting for democratic rights for our movements and peoples against a Government determined to rob the British people of the rights they have won through the centuries and to prevent the extension of democracy to the people of Northern Ireland. That struggle we must win if we are to write our working class paper that will usher in an era of peace and amity in Northern Ireland and between the workers of Britain and the whole of Ireland.

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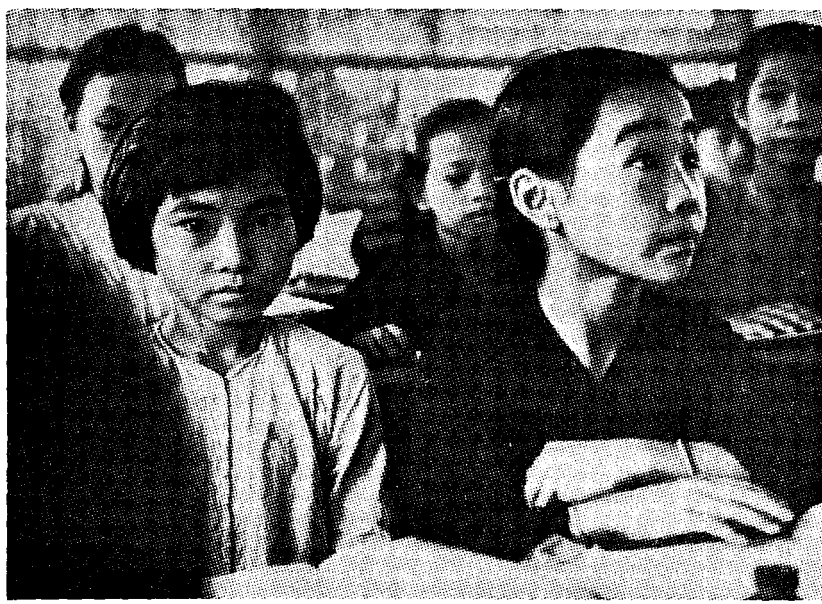
Vietna



In the liberated area in South Vietnam

From *The Vietnam Story* by Ivan Shched

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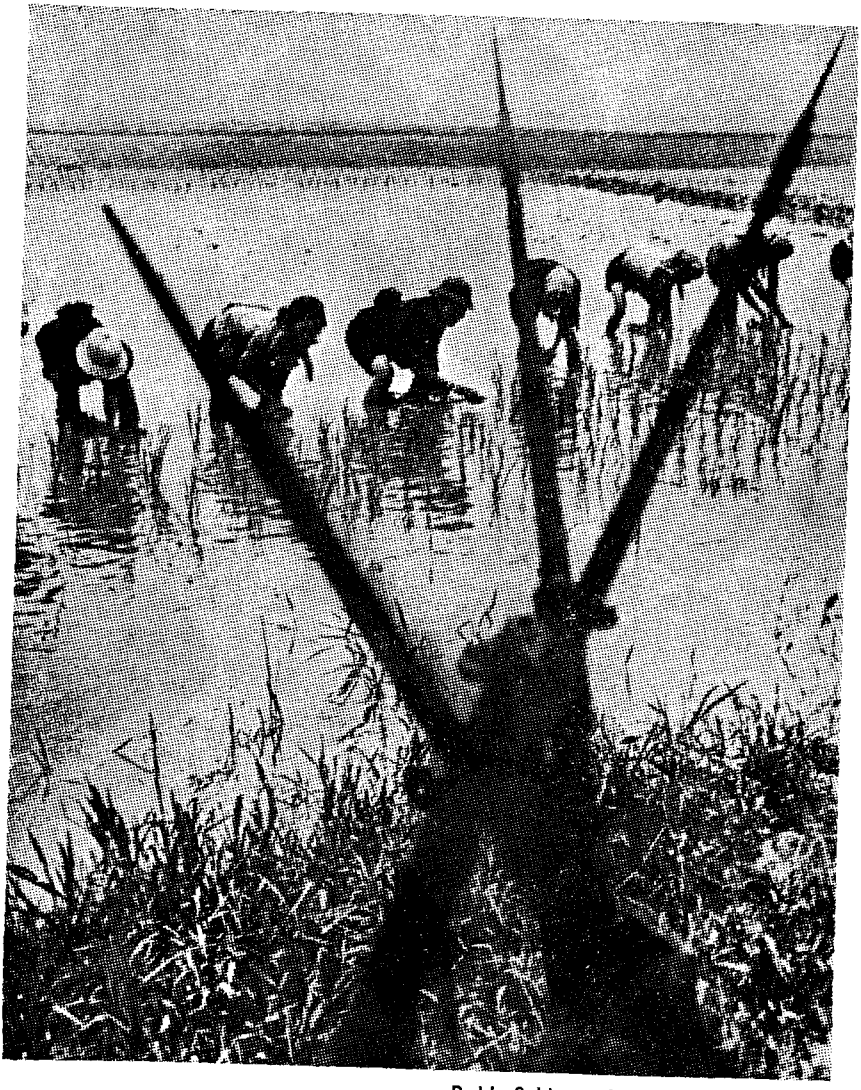
Story



Paddy fields on the seventeenth parallel

viewed on page 191 by Hilda Vernon

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION UNITY

Bob Wright

Executive Council member
Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers
(Engineering Section)

IN Brussels, on February 8-9, 1973, the founding conference of the new European Trade Union Confederation was held, with the participation of 17 trade union organisations from 14 West European countries. Little publicity has been given to the preparations for such a step; its aims and structure are still modest, but it represents the first concerted attempt at grappling with the problems posed by a Western Europe firmly in the grip of monopoly capitalism.

The increasing importance placed on international trade union ties, of which this conference is just one indication, is a recognition—a belated recognition—of the power of the multi-national corporations. Vague talk of 'unity' is no longer enough, any more than organisational link-ups primarily geared to old cold-war objectives.

Capitalism today is truly international. The advanced countries, in particular, are tied together by the operations of free-ranging corporations, who export capital and jobs irrespective of national needs. British firms, for example, already produce twice as much abroad as they export. United States firms produce six times as much abroad as they export. Their priority is with their international production, and not with the national wealth of a country and the prosperity and job security of its working community.

This trend is graphically shown in Western Europe, and in the European Economic Community (EEC) in particular. Of 100 companies accounting for over 75 per cent of British exports which conduct the largest part of foreign trade with the six countries of the old EEC, all, without exception, have direct investment or joint ventures with EEC-based companies. The big British monopolies are already full members of the Common Market, and have been preparing for years. The amount of cross-investment between Western Europe and Britain is reaching into hundreds of millions of pounds annually—and is rapidly accelerating.

Western Europe, including Britain, is a parade ground for the Fords, Chryslers and Philipses of this world. If these vast combines are not to give all the marching orders, then trade union unity across

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national boundaries, and irrespective of political or religious affiliations, must become a concrete reality.

These are the circumstances in which steps towards trade union co-operation, both in Europe and in the world as a whole, must be assessed. Our principles must flow from the realities of the situation. Those who argue, as some union representatives have argued in the discussions in Europe on this issue, that a rigid position must be taken against full co-operation with other important trade union centres not affiliated with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), on the grounds of anti-communist prejudices, are doing a positive disservice to the movement from every point of view. The vitally important trade union organisations in France and Italy, that are affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), must be brought into a link-up for the elementary needs of working class solidarity. It is significant that proposals for unity of the three Italian Confederations have been engendered by the massive struggles of the past few years. Urgent tasks must transcend old prejudices.

The pioneering work for co-operation in recent years has come from the Industrial Trade Sections on an international basis. The role of the International Metal-Workers' Federation (IMF) must be spotlighted, particularly in regard to the auto and electronics industries. The Auto Council, for example, with specific councils being established to tackle the problems posed by particular combines, such as Fords and General Motors, indicates the way forward. They are media not just for exchanging information and views but for clearing the decks for action. Faced as they are with specific industries and situations, they have been an anticipation of broader developments.

At the beginning of 1971, European developments led trade union representatives from the British TUC and from the German and Swedish trade union movements to invite representatives of ICFTU organisations for an informal discussion of common problems. This meeting was held in June 1971. Arising from this, a working party was set up to submit proposals by the middle of 1972, and, in particular, to draft a constitution for a new body. The founding members, who participated in the discussions, were affiliates of the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions (the trade union centre set up within the old six-member EEC) or of the EFTA-TUC (the corresponding body for the old European Free Trade Area), and were composed of national centres and such industry committees as were considered desirable.

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It must be stated that important decisions of principle arose. Certain representatives from European organisations wanted the new organisation to play a very restricted role. They wanted it confined to Common Market countries and, in practice, to act merely as a lobby on the EEC Commission. Furthermore, some wanted it confined to ICFTU affiliates and to put a wall between ourselves and trade union centres such as the French CGT.

The British trade union movement has a different conception of the organisation's role. For us, it is primarily an issue of forging the maximum unity by organised labour against big business in Western Europe, and not to allow artificial barriers, whether of EEC boundaries or of ideological affiliations, to stand in the way.

It is a signal victory for common sense and trade union unity that, from the inaugural meeting of the European Trade Union Confederation in February this year, the new organisation has no constitutional limit on membership and is freed from constitutional ties with the ICFTU, although linked by common membership at this stage.

This gives the opportunity, by having an open-ended organisation, of involving other trade union centres for common objectives. Already, in October 1972, representatives of the ICFTU and of the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) met in Brussels in a spirit of co-operation, and considered the practical areas in which that co-operation can exert itself. Already there has been practical co-operation between the ETUC and the European section of the WCL. In the interests of all concerned, these must be extended in the future. The newly established European organisation must evolve in a way that makes this possible—not only with WCL unions but with unions affiliated to the WFTU.

There has been friendly co-operation, too, between the WCL and the WFTU. Ever since 1971 these two world organisations have been working for a World Trade Union Conference Against Apartheid, an initiative which has now come to fruition with the decision, in conjunction with the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid and the governing body of the International Labour Office, to call the conference in Geneva on April 15 and 16. Representatives of the ICFTU also took part in the preparatory committee, along with those of the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, the All-African Trade Union Federation and the African Trade Union Confederation. Thus, for the first stime, we can hope to see the full weight of all the world's unions being brought to bear against the shameful South African system of exploitation.

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All the trends are towards co-operation and joint action. This is shown in the national context, in the example of Italy, in the sphere of industrial groups, as shown by the emergence of the European Metal-Workers' Federation with which the British section of the IMF, including the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (AUEW), now has liaison, and is shown again in the general position of national trade union organisations co-operating beyond national and ideological boundaries.

The AUEW has fully participated in this process and stands on record as calling for the maximum unity and co-operation, irrespective of other factors.

The European trade union organisation established in February, with Vic Feather as President, is a modest but vital step forward. It is essential from the viewpoint of working class interests, that it evolves as an outward-looking organisation, not only in regard to other trade union organisations in Western Europe but internationally. In particular, co-operation must not be confined to the Western European arena but must extend to trade unions and other organisations in Eastern Europe as well, in the interests of prosperity, peace and security. The rigid mould, built up since the second world war, between working class organisations, must be broken or we will all suffer the consequences.

CHILE—ELECTION AND AFTER

Betty Tate*

THE Popular Unity Government of President Allende has emerged from the elections with an increased percentage of the total vote and with a gain of six deputies in the Chamber and two senators in the Senate. This conformed to the best estimates of Popular Unity leaders, and indicates that they are close to and understand the feelings of the masses. On the other hand, the opposition coalition, led by the Christian Democrat Frei (the previous president), were convinced that the vast majority of the people would reject Popular Unity. Giving this opinion in an interview published in the *Times*, Frei described the Government as representing a small minority. Since the opposition fought the election basically on the issue that

* Betty Tate is a member of the Committee of the Association for British Chilean Friendship.

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the Government was bringing the country to ruin and had lost support, the results represented a loss of credibility for them.

The elections therefore strengthen Allende's position but leave him still without control of the law-making part of the constitution. This may well become an important issue in the months ahead and in two ways. First, there is the question of changing the constitution itself and, secondly, there is the whole question of the position of the Christian Democratic Party.

The Chilean constitution is of the type known to students of the subject as 'checks and balances', specially designed within the framework of bourgeois society to make change difficult. Therefore, as Frei said in the article already referred to, 'a political system existed in Chile before 1970 which allowed a Marxist Government to be elected and to take power.' What he did not say was that the system limited that power by making it extremely difficult to get the requisite legislation for putting the Government's programme into effect. This is a variant on the theme that 'democracy' consists only in voting at elections.

In formulating the programme of Popular Unity, the parties were well aware of the limitations of bourgeois democracy; the programme contains detailed proposals for changing the constitution, the most important being a single chamber to be elected at the same time as the president, equal electoral districts, deputies to be recallable and the judiciary to be composed of representatives of the people and not of the monopolist class.

These changes can be made within the context of the 'legal path to socialism' either by two-thirds majorities in the existing Congress or by plebiscite. A plebiscite is allowed once to a president during his term of office.

At present the Christian Democrats and the National Party, united for the election campaign, have attacked these proposals as anti-democratic and leading straight to dictatorship. For Popular Unity they represent a step in the direction of a broader and more genuine democracy, 'opening the path', as they say, to socialist forms of the state.

The Popular Unity programme was drawn up to cover the six-year period of Allende's presidency: therefore the question of constitutional reform is now likely to come to the fore. Allende has already raised this issue in a speech he made last September at the mass meeting which celebrated the Government's second year:

> A country like Chile cannot function in the face of the systematic and

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> unyielding obstruction of its Government's work on the part of the other powers of the nation. . . . The legislative system, confused, inconsistent and outdated at present, must be replaced by one that is clear, simple, systematic and adaptable to current social conditions.

We are likely to hear hysterical screams of protest from the defenders of a form of democracy which was intended to safeguard for ever their positions of economic power, wealth and privilege. However, one should note the reaction to the election results of a spokesman for the neo-fascist 'country and liberty' movement, associated with the right-wing youth of the National Party—'We have always said that the elections would not [provide] a solution for our country.'

The Christian Democratic Party came into existence in the late fifties as the 'liberal' answer to the threat of revolution. It very quickly gained wide support and at the 1964 election its leader, Frei, obtained more than half of the total vote; in spite of coming third in the 1970 election, the Party has maintained its position in the Congress with 50 out of the 87 opposition seats in the Chamber and 20 out of the 30 opposition Senatorial seats. It is the largest single party. For Popular Unity, the Socialist Party have 28 deputies and the Communist Party 25, out of its total of 63, and seven and nine senatorial seats respectively. The Socialist Party increased their number of deputies from 14, mainly at the expense of the smaller parties on the Popular Unity list. The Communist Party gained three seats. Total popular votes for the parties are not available at the time of writing.

The Christian Democratic Party won and maintains its support on the basis of offering an alternative reform programme to revolutionary change. *Par excellence* the party of the middle classes, it attracts many other elements who have suffered from the decades of economic crisis in Chile, and it appeals especially to the women. Men and women vote separately in Chile and their votes are tabulated separately. In fact, in the election the opposition received only 33,000 more votes from the men than Popular Unity, out of a total poll of 1,845,000, but nearly 400,000 more from the women out of 1,745,000.

It is vital to win large numbers of people who now support the Christian Democratic Party to the realisation that the reforms they want can only be obtained through the fundamental reorganisation of Chilean society; the essential, of course, is to get masses more people involved themselves in the processes of change. Participation has been one of the basic slogans for Popular Unity activity, and no

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one has worked harder than the Communist Party to make it a reality.

In the months ahead an important issue within Popular Unity will be whether, and to what extent, limited Christian Democratic Party support can be obtained for vital legislation. The possibility exists because not all the Christian Democratic Party deputies want to be tied to the reactionary right, and indeed think they will lose electoral support that way. Some support for limited pieces of legislation has been given in the past two years. The Communist Party has fought for a long time in Popular Unity for this matter to be taken more seriously so that planned advance could be made. For example, this was its criticism of the document issued after the important discussions which the leaders of Popular Unity held in January of 1972 to review their progress and their problems. On the whole the Socialist Party has taken the view that arrangements with the Christian Democratic Party would lead to dangerous compromise and what they call 'traditionalism'.

A notable feature of the election has been the consolidation of the four major parties at the expense of the smaller parties. A hopeful sign, in view of the importance of the women's vote, is that ten of the Popular Unity deputies are women, several of them elected for the first time.

This discussion has been confined to the electoral situation but it would be proper to end by reference to the general political and economic context in which the election has been fought and which was described in Gordon Schaffer's article (*LM*, January 1973). The economic difficulties are very great, primarily the result of past distorted development and the present activities of international reaction, especially the US and its allies in Chile. The workers are being protected from the worst effects of the inflation, and it is the wealthy who are paying. Control of the land, finance and a large part of industry has been wrested from the hands of the monopolists. No wonder that the people have been subjected to a campaign of unscrupulous abuse and lying, especially on the radio, designed to confuse and frighten people many of whom are semi-literate and newly involved in politics. The success of the 'Chilean experiment' rests with the power and solidarity of the working class and its ability to win allies. As Allende said:

> Every day we see how great an effort our people are making at organised action within institutions so new that they hardly knew of their existence only a few months ago. In field, factory and mine, in neighbourhood organisations, in the Workers' Assemblies and Production Committees, the workers are now truly participating in management.

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POULSON AND CAPITALISM

F. H. Amphlett Micklewright

AS yet, it is too early to analyse the much-publicised Poulson bankruptcy enquiry for it is still *sub judice*. Inasmuch as all things are possible, John Poulson and his associates may yet prove to be the most blameless set of people who ever walked the earth, and nothing in this article should be read as suggesting the opposite. Nor is it desirable to outrage the complicated rules concerning contempt of court whilst proceedings are still in progress. But certain incidents which have arisen out of the procedure do inspire comment. Mr Muir Hunter QC, the counsel for the trustees and an eminent bankruptcy lawyer, has pursued his task of trying to find out on behalf of his clients where the money has gone, and rescuing for the creditors such sums as he can. In the course of his questionings, he mentioned the names of certain well-known people from the world of politics and of business. Hot denials have been heard on all sides together with a certain amount of journalistic sensationalism about the reputations of third parties. Some aspersions do seem to have been cast which proved to be of minor importance or wholly unjustified. It has been these very trivialities upon which the popular press has mostly seized, thereby diverting attention from the real issues underlying the outcry.

One incident was especially strange. Poulson was asked certain questions by Mr Muir Hunter concerning his relations with various named third parties. An unnamed complainant laid a charge of unprofessional conduct with the Disciplinary Committee of the Bar Council, charging counsel with an unprofessional attitude towards the mention, in his cross-examination, of third parties, and asking that he be restrained. It took the relevant committee only one short sitting to exonerate Mr Muir Hunter. But it could be suggested, so far as may appear on the facts, that an attempt had been made to gag counsel or to suppress publicity concerning certain matters raised in the case. Whatever be the final truth of the matter, the complaint could be so interpreted. The whole incident was entirely without precedent in the history of the Bar during the progress of a case, and it illustrated the extent to which certain interested parties were willing to go.

The establishment is now howling with rage concerning the type of publicity which the enquiry involves. Its own figures have been

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attacked, and it has no remedy with which to hammer the onslaught of publicity. It has even been suggested that the enquiry should have been heard in private! Claims are made that the amount of damage already done to the reputations of third parties should be sufficient cause for the stifling of the whole issue. Sympathy is widely expressed for persons who have been slurred without opportunity of reply. In a magisterial article, the *Times* of January 31, 1973, called for a revision of the bankruptcy laws in this particular. In fact, it overlooked the point that, although the third parties had no opportunity of reply in court, the whole forces of the mass media, both of press and of radio, were placed immediately at their service for this very purpose.

But the really interesting question at the moment is that of the anger shown by the capitalist press towards the procedures of the Poulson enquiry. Basically, capitalism is itself a rapacious system, using legalised violence against both nations and individuals when circumstances so suit. But capitalism must also demand that the capitalist game be played according to the rules. Rogue elephants will discredit the whole system by showing up its accepted methods. Capitalist society is called upon to pillory one of its own supporters in order to protect the rest, and to hide how much can still be done legally. The cheat has imperilled the system, but discussion upon the causes underlying his disciplining is to be deplored because it will bring discredit upon the system itself.

An interesting case which illustrates this point in some detail is that of *R v Kylsant* (1931). Lord Kylsant, a pillar of church and state, was a leading shipping magnate. His companies profited out of the shipping boom at the close of the first world war. Heavy reserves were accumulated out of which later dividends were paid. Times became lean, there was a shipping slump, and the companies were heading towards bankruptcy. Lord Kylsant decided that they needed a large sum in additional capital to keep going, and he issued a debenture proposal. But, in this connection, he published a balance sheet which averaged the profits over ten years and did not expose the true contemporary condition of the company. The transaction came to light, and numerous complaints were made in the relevant quarters by small investors who had put their modest life-savings into the debentures and now seemed fated to lose their all. One of the prosecuting counsel, D. N. Pritt QC, later described the fraud as crude and obvious. In due course, Lord Kylsant was charged with an offence under the Larceny Act (1862), convicted at the Central Criminal Court, and sentenced to twelve months im-

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prisonment by Mr Justice Wright. His practices were so clearly fraudulent and undesirable that the clause in the Act of 1862 was strengthened by the Companies Act (1948) which made them into a statutory criminal offence.

So far, the story was merely one of fraud in high places. If the defendant had been some obscure shady financier, there would have been no sequel upon which to comment. But the whole prosecution raised something of an outcry in capitalist circles. It was unthinkable that a leading capitalist, a peer of the realm, and a pillar of the establishment, should be prosecuted as a common cheat. At a time when the sky was still overcast with the clouds of the Wall Street crash of 1929, it was urged that a prosecution of this kind could only do infinite harm by exposing what could occur at the highest levels. Everything was done to attempt to persuade the Government to drop the matter. Lord Kylsant called in person upon the Prime Minister, Ramsay Macdonald, to protest against the prosecution of a person of such supreme importance to the world as himself. Macdonald was suitably impressed, and the Government was forced to balance such a consideration against the ruin of a number of small investors and the consequent public scandal. In the end, it was decided that prosecution must be undertaken, owing to this scandal, and Kylsant went to prison. But, immediately, the whole effort of the capitalist press was directed towards the securing of sympathy for the ennobled prisoner. The real character of his fraud was glossed over. Remark was made upon the horror of the fact that a person of such importance and background should be forced to undergo the rigours of a prison system considered quite good enough for the working class offender or for the defendants in the Communist conspiracy trial of 1925. Capitalism was trying, by a method of glossing over the facts, to hide an exposure which it had failed to prevent.

The Kylsant case well illustrates the dilemma for capitalism when it is forced to get rid of a rogue elephant at as slight a cost as possible to its own reputation. Any outcry concerning the present bankruptcy enquiry should be considered from the standpoint of this capitalist dilemma, whatever be the truth concerning Poulson and the persons mentioned in the case. It may well be that some measure of protection should be given to third parties who happen to be mentioned in proceedings of this kind, although it is easy to forget that many persons, including the late Dr Havelock Ellis, have suffered similarly through mention in a very different type of proceedings. It should be possible for the person mentioned to be

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warned, to be represented by counsel, to submit a sworn statement and to be cross-examined upon it. But this is a very different solution to one which would permit the suppression of whole areas of relevant fact in the interests of capitalism at large simply because some individual might be mentioned in a somewhat invidious way. As has been seen in the Poulson enquiry, the mass media are always at hand to provide a remedy. It would be a matter for concern if, under some such cloak, the law should be amended in a manner which would hamstring any final enquiry by limiting the scope of the proceedings. The present time is too early to make an assessment of the Poulson enquiry. But a stage has been reached which recalls all too vividly the efforts made during the Kylsant case to avoid comment or scandal and thus to solve a capitalist dilemma. Certainly, the existence of this dilemma must not be allowed to create privacy and to limit an effective public hearing in matters of this kind. A cheat against the rules, such as Lord Kylsant, may well illustrate in miniature to the world at large the rapacious manner by which the whole system is conditioned, and may show the law as acting as the handmaid of rules which may themselves be perfectly legal and yet be removed from any form of moral honesty so far as the general community be concerned. The cheat is an embarrassment to his fellow-capitalists and a menace so far as the investor or, as in the Hatry case, the ratepayer be concerned. His removal without scandal to the system as a whole is one of the dilemmas of capitalism. Mr Poulson and his associates may be guiltless as far as the facts are concerned. But, from the angle of Marxist analysis, the dilemma can only be resolved finally by the overthrow of capitalism itself, and not by some tampering with the law in a manner designed to protect the reputation and the perpetuation of a corrupt and evil industrial and commercial system. It must not be forgotten that much of the present outcry about the reputation of third parties mentioned in bankruptcy proceedings is motivated by little more than this end.

Greetings to Paul Robeson

LABOUR MONTHLY *greets Paul Robeson on his 75th birthday—April 9 and salutes a fighter for racial equality and the freedom of mankind.*

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THE MUNICH DRAMA (7)

I. M. Maisky

(*Academician Maisky tells, in this seventh instalment of Chamberlain's futile attempts to ride the Nazi tiger, and of the capitulation of the Czechoslovak bourgeoisie*—Ed. *LM*)

CHURCHILL once said that Chamberlain wanted to ride the tiger. This became clear at Berchtesgaden, but the tiger Chamberlain met proved, not only out for blood, but quite a cunning beast. Hitler did not simply growl, but used the method of the stick and the carrot. The stick was a very big one and the carrot very small. However, such a combination worked almost without a hitch where Chamberlain was concerned.

Hitler tried this method for the first time at Berchtesgaden and with a certain degree of caution. He engaged, as usual, in a lengthy monologue in which he quite explicitly, but in comparatively moderate terms, revealed his aggressive intentions in regard to the Sudetenland. Chamberlain confined himself to a few questions and remarks. After three hours he expressed doubt whether it had been worth his coming if the fate of Czechoslovakia had been decided in advance. Hitler changed his tone immediately. He began to assure his guest that it was important for him to know whether Chamberlain recognised the principle of self-determination of nations with regard to the Sudetan Germans. If he did, then Hitler would not find it difficult to reach agreement with so commonsensical a person as Chamberlain on the forms and methods of implementing this principle.

The British Prime Minister, eager to believe Hitler, declared that for an answer to so vitally fundamental a question he must return to London for consultations with the Cabinet. The Führer accepted this as proper, displayed all external signs of respect for Chamberlain and agreed on a 'friendly' basis that they would meet again in a few days. The Nazi 'carrot' had had its effect, and Chamberlain left on September 16 with a growing sense of his Messianic role.

The following five days saw feverish activity in London, with the Government in almost constant session. On September 18, 1938, there was a meeting of British and French Foreign Ministers in London. There were major quarrels and disagreements, but finally Chamberlain and Bonnet won the day.

The two Governments worked out the so-called Anglo-French plan for solving the Czechoslovak question, the essence of which

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was: 1. The Sudetenland was to be handed over to Germany (this referred to areas with a German population exceeding 50 per cent); 2. Czechoslovakia's new borders would be defined by a specially set up international body on which Czechoslovakia would be represented. This body would also organise the exchange of population where this was considered essential; 3. Czechoslovakia's pacts with France and the Soviet Union were to be annulled, but Czechoslovakia's new borders would receive international guarantees with Britain and France subscribing to them.

It is clear that the British and French Governments in fact signed this at Hitler's demand and thus took upon themselves the responsibility of dismembering Czechoslovakia. But they were hoping to effect this painful operation calmly, without haste, with financial compensation for material losses and with the application of a certain anaesthetic in the form of an 'international guarantee' of the new borders of Czechoslovakia.

It remained to impose the 'Anglo-French plan' on Prague. On September 19 it was handed to Benes. The situation became tense in the extreme. In the event of its realisation the 'Anglo-French plan' would deprive Czechoslovakia of all her fortifications along the German border and would annul her pacts with France and the USSR, putting in their place only a vague promise of an 'international guarantee' of her borders. Almost a million Czechs living in the Sudetenland would be in the position of a national minority within the Third Reich. Big material assets, including highly important industrial enterprises, would go to Germany.

The terrible threat to the country's very existence as an independent state created great alarm among the Czech people. In a communication to Moscow dated September 22, 1938, S. Alexandrovsky, Soviet Ambassador in Prague, reported astounding scenes there. Crowds were singing the national anthem and the Internationale. At meetings speeches were made about the hope of support from the USSR; appeals rang out for the country to defend itself.

But a very big role was played in Czechoslovakia by the bourgeois parties, especially the Agrarian Party, whose head, Hodza, was Prime Minister. The Agrarians pinned their hopes on France and Britain. Hodza was an opponent of help from Moscow. Benes's party, the Popular Socialists, wavered; so did the Social Democrats.

For a day and a half there were constant meetings in Prague. Immediately after receiving the 'Anglo-French plan', President Benes, through Alexandrovsky, asked the Government of the USSR to reply as quickly as possible to two questions: (a) would the

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USSR immediately come to Czechoslovakia's aid if France remained faithful and also gave help, and (b) would the USSR give support to Czechoslovakia's appeal for aid in the League of Nations Council?

Next day Prague received a telegram from the Czechoslovak envoy in Moscow which gave the following information: 'In reply to the question whether the USSR is prepared to give rapid and effective aid if France remains faithful to the pact, the Government replies: "Yes, immediate and effective aid." To the second question . . . the Government replies: "Yes in every respect".'

The result was that Prague rejected the 'Anglo-French plan' as unacceptable, and proposed that the point in dispute be settled by arbitration. Government circles in London and Paris were in a great state of agitation, and Chamberlain and Bonnet were particularly displeased. How could this little country dare to cause Europe so much trouble! To put the British Premier, who had exerted so much effort for its 'salvation', in so difficult a position! On September 21 I made the following entry in my diary:

> There is no limit to Anglo-French baseness! Yesterday evening, on receiving the Czech answer . . . Chamberlain got together with Daladier, and late at night (it is said to have been at 3 a.m.) the two Premiers, without consulting their Cabinets, sent the Czechoslovak Government an ultimatum: either Czechoslovakia adopted the 'Anglo-French plan', or London and Paris would throw her to the mercy of fate in the event of a German attack. . . . The Czechs were given six hours to reply. The Czechoslovak Cabinet met at night and remained in session until morning.
>
> Some members of the Government insisted that the ultimatum be rejected and that the struggle be waged against Germany with the sole help of the USSR. Others objected strongly, saying that in this case everywhere (meaning in Britain and France) there would be shouts about a war for the 'Bolshevisation of Europe', from which Czechoslovakia could only suffer. Early in the morning of September 21 the Czechoslovak Government took the painful decision to accept the Anglo-French ultimatum.

The Hodza Cabinet resigned, and at a time when mass patriotic demonstrations were going on the 'Cabinet of National Concentration' came to power. This was in essence capitulation arising from the fears of the Czechoslovak bourgeoisie. The Soviet Government had made it clear to the Czechoslovak leaders that it was ready to support Czechoslovakia against aggression by Hitler even if France refused to carry out her obligations. But the leaders of the Czechoslovak bourgeoisie preferred capitulation and were powerful enough to carry through their decision. Chamberlain did not have it all plain sailing in carrying out his line. I wrote in my diary:

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September 14. Attlee saw Chamberlain yesterday and insisted that there should be a joint declaration by Britain, France and the USSR on helping Czechoslovakia if Germany attacked. Chamberlain, however, found such a step 'inexpedient'. Eden visited Halifax, and Churchill went to see Chamberlain: they both demanded a clear statement of the Government's position, but without success.

September 18. A Labour Party delegation went to see Chamberlain and insisted on a three-power declaration by Britain, France and the USSR. Once again the Prime Minister rejected this proposal. . . . The delegation declared: 'It's now or never!' The Prime Minister agreed that it would be necessary sooner or later to fight Germany, but he considered that the present time was not suitable. Then he began to 'scare' Labour Party members. Hitler was supposed to have said to him straight out at Berchtesgaden: 'I'm 49 and I've set myself the aim of seeing that all Germans are united under the flag of the Reich before the end of my days. . . . For the sake of this I am prepared to risk a world war.'

Not satisfied with this, the Prime Minister pleaded poverty. Britain, after all, was poorly armed and France, it seemed, did not have a good air force. . . . Russia's intentions were not clear. Nothing remained but to give way. . . . After the talk with Chamberlain the Labour Party delegation summoned the National Council of Labour, which decided to invite representatives of the French Socialists to London. Churchill, Eden and Sinclair (Secretary of State for Air) held a meeting. They were all frantic and decided to get in touch with the Labour Party representatives. . . .

September 21. Attlee and Greenwood had a further talk with Chamberlain and Halifax. The Labour leaders demanded a categoric change in British policy as regards Czechoslovakia. . . . They stated that after reading Litvinov's speech at the League of Nations they were obliged to say that the information previously given them by Chamberlain about the position of the USSR was completely at variance with the speech of Litvinov. . . . The Prime Minister was embarrassed and made Bonnet his excuse. Attlee and Greenwood then turned to Halifax and pressed him to say whether the Soviet Ambassador had informed him of the position of the USSR before his departure for Geneva.

Halifax was also embarrassed and replied that he had in fact had a talk with Maisky on this question . . . but that Maisky had confined himself to general phrases (in fact I had given him details of the essence of the talk between Litvinov and Payart on September 2). In conclusion Chamberlain told the Labour leaders that there could be no question of a change in British policy. . . .

September 22. There was a joint meeting of the General Council of the TUC and the Labour Party Executive Committee. . . . It was decided to send a further delegation. Chamberlain declared that it was impossible for him to receive it (he was flying to Godesberg to see Hitler). It was received by Halifax. It included Dalton, Morrison and Citrine. The delegation demanded an immediate *démarche* in Berlin of Britain, France and the USSR. . . . Halifax's reply was, in effect: 'At the present time no European combination can prevent the suppression of Czechoslovakia.'

The delegation reported to a joint meeting of the TUC General Council and the Labour Party Executive. . . . The meeting decided to appeal to the

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country and to hold 2,000 protest meetings against the Cabinet's policy the following weekend.

The meetings were held, but the weight of the Cliveden set was so great and Chamberlain so obstinate that the British Government continued along its course to catastrophe. On September 22 Chamberlain met Hitler again.

BOOKS

Imperialism Today—An Evaluation of Major Issues and Events of Our Times
Gus Hall
International Publishers (Central Books), 384 pp, £2

THE AUTHOR, who is the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the USA, makes a critical analysis of US imperialism and its role in the world today. Hall assesses imperialism not only as a 'threat to all people' but as 'history's greatest obstacle to human progress'. He sees it as 'a socio-economic system trying to avoid the judgement of history by brute force.' Describing 'aggression' as 'a way of life for imperialism', Hall presents an indictment, with a calendar of its acts of military aggression, colonial plunder and exploitation of the workers.

The bulk of the book, as one would expect, deals with and analyses United States imperialism which is 'the headquarters of world imperialism'. The dream of the 'American Century', always a myth, 'is turning into a US imperialist nightmare' as a result of the sharpening of the inter-imperialist rivalries, of its sinking 'into the quagmire of its aggression in Indochina', and, above all, of the new relationship of world forces—especially the growth of the world system of socialism and the rising national liberation movement.

The book is a compilation of articles, reports and speeches over the last few years that relate to the theme of the book, with a newly written foreword and conclusion. In an introductory note, Hall says the material was not originally prepared 'with a book in mind' but was the 'reflection of an active participant and a partisan in the struggle against imperialism.'

It has 42 chapters and is divided into four parts: 'Emergence of US Imperialism to the Centre of World Imperialism', 'Reaction to Specific Issues and Events', 'The Struggle Against Opportunism' and 'An Historical Necessity'.

The readers of *Labour Monthly*, who have had the advantage of a monthly estimate of events in the context of the panoramic development of imperialism and the struggles against it—with emphasis on the role of British imperialism—may well find of greatest interest the wealth of factual material dealing with US imperialism and its specific operations at home and abroad. Among others, these cover trends in American capitalism and their impact on the working class; its 'path of uneven development'; its world in-

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vestments, the new multi-nationals and the rise of the conglomerates; the meaning of 'the Military-Industrial Complex'; 'Kissinger's Follies'; US Imperialism in Africa and Puerto Rico; 'Neocolonialism Needs a Labour Cover' and 'Political-Ideological Struggles'.

Dealing with the future, Hall predicted already in 1971 that the war in Vietnam was 'a war US imperialism cannot win.' He also says: 'The drive of US imperialism to dominate, exploit and enslave the world, launched after World War 2 has ignomoniously bogged down,' and, irrespective of what one calls it, it means 'those policies of aggression have now suffered defeat.' Instead of the old position where capitalist world stabilisation was dependent on the US, today the US 'has become a source of instability.'

'To think it is possible to change the basic nature of imperialism is a dangerous illusion,' he says. The 'pathway to its total destruction' requires struggle 'to curb and quarantine imperialist aggressors, to fight to free territories from oppression, and to force imperialism to retreat within its own national boundaries.' What is needed today, says Hall, are 'new initiatives, new struggles' in order to realise 'the possibilities for new victories against imperialism.'

JOHN WILLIAMSON

Lessons from LSE

LSE Branch of the Communist Party of Great Britain, 26 pp, 10p

SOCIOLOGISTS fabricating fantasies about the student movement naturally use the London School of Economics just off Fleet Street as their paradigm. This little pamphlet prepared by communist students at LSE may dispel some of these illusions.

F.N.

Identity and Relationship

J. M. Hawthorn

Lawrence & Wishart, 196 pp, £3

LAWRENCE & WISHART are to be congratulated on publishing this learnedly written work of original Marxist scholarship. Jeremy Hawthorn's book is a comprehensive review of literary criticism in Britain and America at the present, a critique, not only of the non-Marxist, but of some tendencies in Marxist criticism as well. While it is the work of a scholar, with the paraphernalia of footnotes, reading references, quotations, and bibliography, and carries with it all the earmarks of detailed analytical study, it will be of great interest to the non-expert in literature too, especially to the Marxist non-expert in literary criticism because it will enable him to see Marxist dialectics applied undogmatically and lucidly. Nevertheless it must be said that the first beneficiaries of Hawthorn's work will be the workers in the field of literary criticism and its evaluation, especially that growing number who, already moving closely to an awareness of the value of Marxism in their studies, have tended to be repelled by more dogmatic presentations of 'Marxism' to which they have been introduced. I feel confident that Hawthorn has shed an important clarity on the subject which will influence the writers on literature and literary criticism in this country and in the US.

How should we approach a poem? Is it a self-contained, 'autonomous' work of art, to be judged, once and for all, exclusively, on what it contains? Can it be judged, by itself, in isolation, without reference to the author and his evnironment, or the century or the country and the social circumstances in which it was produced? Conversely, do we have all the answers as to the meaning and the

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significance of a poem when we have the biographical details of the author? Has the poem, once created, an independent life, unchanging, fixed and absolute for all time? Does a work of art mean the same thing even to all the contemporaries of the writer? Can it mean the same thing to the generations living after it as it did to contemporaries? Is it an artefact whose use and value is determined, not only determined, but as it were exhausted by the original impetus and creativity which brought it into existence? Is it true, and how true is it, that a great work of art is not encapsulated within the covers of the book that contains it, but comes to life, comes to separate and distinct life every time every reader reads it—so that the end-product is the result of a co-operative experience in which writer, bringing his contribution to the book, meets reader bringing his life-experiences, and the marriage of writer and reader gives a new evaluation? Must not then every reader evaluate and re-evaluate, and, even more so, must not every generation evaluate afresh in the light of its own collective experiences the work—so that in fact no judgment has validity for all time?

These and many more questions are examined. They are of course by no means all new: but the answers are illuminating, and the schoolmasterly rebukes of formalism, and the corrections handed down to critics feeling their way to Marxism, as well as to those whose Marxism has a dogmatic twist are valuable. A brief review such as this cannot go into more detail: but must note that in laying Lenin's Philosophical Notebooks under tribute, and in quoting extensively from Gramsci, from Lukacz and from Lucien Goldmann, Hawthorn has performed an important service in opening the works of these writers to the literary critics. I personally was glad to see the numerous references to Christopher Caudwell, even when these references were critical; and if I may end on a querulous note—why was not Ralph Fox thought worthy of mention? There is still much in *The Novel and the People* which is valuable today.

BEN AINLEY

Bradford Trades Council 1872-1972
Mary Ashraf
Bradford Trades Council, 122 pp, 75p

THIS BOOK published by Bradford Trades Council on its centenary 1872-1972 is a story of 100 years of service to the working class in general and trade unionism in particular. Born, like most trades councils, out of misery, poverty and exploitation of working men, women and children, it provided the instrument for co-ordinating, organising and leading the struggles of workers for elementary justice, better living standards and human dignity. It also organised solidarity actions as well as financial aid to trade unionists who were in the front line of battle.

The Bradford Trades Council's proud history not only records industrial struggles on wages and hours, but also against reactionary local and national authorities. The struggles for factory safeguards and regulations—health, education, child welfare—found the Bradford Trades Council in the vanguard; wherever working people were engaged in struggle or were striving for improvement of their lives, there was the Trades Council. Like most others, it provided the training ground for future leaders of the trade union and labour movement, including a goodly proportion of MPs.

One of its greatest achievements was 'the achievement of the Council in creating a common platform for the many shades of opinion in the

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industrial and political movements of labour'. This creation of an organisation where all shades of working class opinion could meet, discuss and decide on questions and problems affecting trade unionists, their lives and aspirations is, undoubtedly, an important part of its strength—a lesson still to be learned by the upper echelons of the Labour Party.

This short history is magnificently produced and is a credit to the Trades Council and to Mary Ashraf its author. It not only records history but also brings it to life. Unfortunately, as the Editorial Committee records, they were able to cover only the first 55 years of the Council's existence, because of their slender resources and time available, so that effectively the history stops at 1927. But we are promised the rest within two years. I hope volume 2 will be published well within that time, and I look forward to some pleasant hours in reading it.

JULIE JACOBS

The Socialist Register 1972
Edited by Ralph Miliband and John Saville

Merlin, 306 pp, £1.20

THE SOCIALIST REGISTER for 1972 is on the whole a very interesting series of essays, but in some there seems to be a tendency to write off the proletariat as a revolutionary force at this stage of history. Nothing is further from the truth! One only had to be in Birmingham at the time of the miners' strike to realise this. Whoever was fortunate enough to see the car workers marching out of the factories with their banners high in support of the miners at the Battle of the Saltley Gates would have realised immediately that this could be a revolutionary force on the march.

W.L.W.

The War Hitler Won
Nicholas Bethell

Allen Lane, 472 pp, £4

AS THINGS STAND NOW, it will be thirty years before the people of this 'democratic' country will be allowed to see the written evidence of the dirty work carried on behind the scenes by their representatives, and by others not so representative, in connection with the 'cold war', the Middle East, Vietnam and the Common Market. Only then will they know of the sheer treachery of which they have been made the victims. The kind of revelation which they may expect may be deduced from this book which is based on documents made public recently after a lapse of thirty years. Covering the period of 'the phoney war' in September-November 1939, when we bilked and betrayed Poland, it shows how, in the process of doing this, our leaders and their French fellow-conspirators paved the way for Dunkirk, the fall of France and (almost) the fall of Britain. Worse still, it leaves us in no doubt at all but that these sequels were positively wanted by certain sinister leading personalities in this country, who have never been brought to book for their treason, and whose successors are quite evidently active on the same lines at the present time.

Were our chiefs of staff—Ironside, Newall and Dudley Pound—simply 'naïve to the point of treachery', as the author too kindly describes them? On September 11, 1939, they presented the Cabinet with a document which decided them to refrain from bombing Germany in order to relieve our Polish allies of some of the terrible pressure on them. The author has aptly described this as 'one of the most misleading documents ever to have influenced a crucial military decision'. It reminded the Cabinet that they had promised President Roosevelt to restrain the RAF, just as

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Hitler and Goering had promised to restrict the Luftwaffe; falsely quoted the Polish mission then in London as having told them that the Germans 'were trying to abide by rules'; and declared officially: 'We have no definite or reliable proof that they have not done so'!

Was it 'naïveté' on the part of Chamberlain and his Cabinet colleagues when, on the basis of this 'professional counsel', they allowed the Air Minister, Kingsley Wood to persist in his policy of refusing to let the RAF carry out its intention of bombing Germany's munition factories, munition dumps and supply lines, on grounds (quoted in this book) which were patently laughable?

One wonders, in the circumstances, why the author has tried to defend such cheats and traitors by writing that the Polish leader Gomulka was 'wrong' when he declared later (1962): 'The intention was quite transparent. Hitler was to march across the corpse of Poland towards the East, against the Soviet Union.' For he admits elsewhere that 'the communist Russians saw their worst suspicions confirmed,' because there were prominent men among the British and French leaders who 'even after the outbreak of war, persisted in the belief that Russian communism was a greater danger than Hitlerism, and Hitler a necessary bulwark against it.'

Working in parallel with our chiefs of staff, moreover, was another section of Hitler's 'Fifth Column' in this country which was less subtle in its procedure, but more dangerous. This consisted of men in the mainstream of Britain's political life who made no secret of the fact that they actually liked much of what Hitler stood for, who had done much to promote his successes and to popularise them among the British people, and who now advocated an ending even of 'the phoney war' on terms which would recognise the extension of Hitler's 'New Order' over Poland, notwithstanding Britain's and France's solemn undertaking to prevent this. These were not small fry, like Mosley and his fascists who had played the role of diverting attention from them. They included several Conservative MPs and a number of peers of all parties: Lord Rushcliffe, Lord Arnold, Lord Ponsonby, Lord Noel-Buxton, Lord Brockett, Lord Harmsworth, the Duke of Buccleuch (who held an appointment at Buckingham Palace) and the Duke of Westminster (who was on very intimate and friendly terms with many powerful 'faceless men', as well as with some of the Cabinet Ministers).

Meeting on September 12, this bunch of traitors adopted a memorandum for presentation to the Prime Minister and certain Cabinet Ministers, which repudiated the allied war aim of the root and branch destruction of Nazism as 'the parrot-cry of the newspapers, *especially those controlled by the left and the Jews*,' and denounced the war in pursuit of it as one in which 'the two races which are the most akin and the most disciplined will continue hostilities until both are bled almost to death.' It proposed a face-saving peace settlement, at the expense of Poland and Czechoslovakia, which would have been a greater surrender than Munich.

Chamberlain, for whom the author seeks surprisingly to find excuses, must have been most embarrassed to receive this manifesto, because just such a sell-out had already been worked out for him by Ivone Kirkpatrick at the Foreign Office. He differed from this pro-Nazi group on two points only: whether Hitler was to be trusted or not, and the timing of our surrender to him. Instead of having the traitors arrested, he re-

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ferred the memorandum to a senior officer in our Counter-Intelligence named Sir Joseph Ball, whom Bethell describes as 'even more mysterious than Sir Horace Wilson' (Chamberlain's 'advisor' on foreign affairs, and chief architect of Munich), and whom he exposes as having been 'involved in the Zinoviev Letter, secret negotiations with Mussolini and other strange affairs.'

This man Ball was evidently not surprised to see the memorandum, for in his report on it—submitted through Sir Horace Wilson—he revealed knowledge that it was based on a draft made by a former Conservative MP named Drummond-Wolff 'after his last interview with Goering'. There is no indication, however, that he had previously reported this visit, or its outcome, to the Prime Minister or the Cabinet. It is significant, moreover, that a Swedish 'businessman' named Dahlerus, supposedly 'neutral', who had acted as unofficial go-between between the British Government and Goering, was not exposed by British 'Counter-Intelligence' to its political bosses as having close personal ties with Goering and a financial interest of £250,000 in Germany, until he had exhausted his disruptive utility to Hitler. It is not surprising, therefore, though very shocking to recall, that his advice to Chamberlain, endorsed by Sir Horace Wilson, was: 'It would be highly dangerous for the Government to give the slightest indication *at the present time* that it would be prepared to listen to any such proposals.' This was not because of their outrageous defeatism and anti-semitism, but because the Government themselves might wish to put forward very similar proposals *at a later date*! The 'naïve, peace-loving' Chamberlain wished to have his hands free to allow German expansion towards the East. Such is Bethell's own interpretation of the event, and he concludes: 'It is terrifying to speculate about what would have been the attitude of these conspirators if Hitler had ever gained control over the British Isles. Unlike the rest, they cried "peace", not through any love of peace as such, but because they had much in common with the enemy.' They are amongst us still—and are still virulently active.

EDGAR P. YOUNG

The Shadow: Latin America Faces the Seventies
Sven Lindqvist
Penguin, 292 pp, 55p

THE STARK FACTS of the exploitation of the people of Latin America have rarely been presented in a more compelling manner. Sven Lindqvist has produced a book which is a political thriller, and one is left with no doubts as to the villains of the piece as the characters reveal their thoughts and deeds in a series of masterly interviews.

Not only the villains are interviewed. He talks to the people: the woman who goes to work leaving her baby all day, locked in the dark in her one-room hut in the slums. The woman has no other means of support, and there is nowhere else to leave the child.

He talks to politicians: the mayor of Chorillos, whose only plan for financing desperately-needed roads and sewerage projects is to build luxury flats, hotels and restaurants at the beach, and use the income from rents and taxes to pay for essential services for the people. He is shown a rehousing scheme for people from the slums, bright new houses which are situated some way outside the town, where there is no work. The people cannot afford the bus fares into town or the higher cost of food, so they sell their new houses, first the doors, then the window frames,

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literally brick by brick, then move back to the slums.

He talks to business men: there are those who look at the increasing population and have visions of mass markets for their products in a few years' time. Until that mythical moment they reduce the number of their employees, cut the wages of the remainder, and wait for purchasers to emerge somehow from their abject poverty. He talks to the American boss of a tin mining company, who disarmingly admits to recovering invested capital in five years; to the other business men who laugh and say that it must be two years at most, otherwise the investment wouldn't have been made; to the students who have made a study of this particular enterprise and reckon that the firm is retrieving *three times* its original invested capital *each year*.

And this leads to one of the factors which emerges powerfully from this book. Not only are the people exploited in the accepted Marxist sense of the word, that is by the capitalist paying the worker at the market price of his labour, and then selling the goods produced at the market price of those goods. But international capitalism also exploits the people in a way which is dishonest even by its own standards.

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The examples are endless. He interviews military men, church men, political prisoners. On every page of this book (apart from the editorial foreword by Richard Gott) there is something to make you think.

MARGARET GOODWIN

The Vietnam Story
Ivan Shchedrov
Novosti (Central Books), 238 pp, 75p

OUR RESPONSIBILITY towards Vietnam's fight for national salvation has not ended with the January Peace Agreement. The propaganda machines are as active as ever to distort the facts and weaken solidarity and understanding.

The picture is put straight, starting from 1954 right up to July 1972, in this book, in which the written story is made vivid by dozens of splendid photographs. Ivan Shchedrov, its author, is uniquely qualified to give this service to truth. He spent more than ten years in Vietnam reporting the war for *Pravda*, both in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and with the South Vietnam national liberation forces.

With this book to hand, any supporter of Vietnam will be better qualified to campaign for and organise support, as Shchedrov writes, 'for a nation of 40 million, who have refused to be brought to their knees and who have risen, young and old, to fight for their right to live a free life on the land of their forefathers, for the right to plan and build their future.'

HILDA VERNON

Soviet Armenia
A. A. Aslanyan and others
Progress Publishers (Central Books), 256 pp, £1

AN EASILY READABLE informative book, this describes a small country with exceptionally complex natural features. Interesting detail is given about the people, their ancient history and culture; and the latest Armenian achievements are listed in economy, science, technology and the arts. Armenia is a country of the Middle East, and as such may be destined to play an important role in the area in the not too distant future. L. D.

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'FOR FERNANDO . . .'

HAVING become so interested in locating old copies of *Labour Monthly* and other material connected with the journal's early years, I can well understand the excitement of those who take on the responsibility of being the archivists of our movement when something new—old, I should say—is discovered to add to a collection.

A group of labour movement historians in Brighton recently found that a series of local demonstrations in 1938-39 had been filmed and the footage preserved in the camerman's home for over thirty years. It had been shot using an outdated amateur gauge, so it was only by good luck that the group was able to see a run-through: the necessary equipment, a 9.5mm projector, had been preserved with the film. Through Educational & Television Films (well known for their service as distributors, and perhaps less well recognised for their work on labour movement history in film), the National Film Archive were put in touch, and were so glad of the 'find' that 16mm copies have now been made in spite of all the technical difficulties. Brighton's labour historians have benefited and so has the national archive.

Something similar has happened in connection with our own Fund item, 'AMT for Fernando and Guilherme'. That contribution originated with Portuguese political prisoners in the early nineteen-fifties. The story—or that part of it that can safely be told today—is waiting for space in a later issue, but the feature relevant here is that a letter from 'Fernando' to 'AMT' has been kept for nearly two decades for what was felt to be its purely personal worth. This has been a useful 'find' for Portuguese archivists who are collecting material on the long-sustained activity, much of it conducted underground, against the regimes of Salazar and Caetano.

In neither of these cases was the material actually lost: it simply required someone to point out that there was a collection in which it (or a copy) would have an important place. This lesson is worthy of thought by every one of our readers, who may have or know of similar documents, photographs, banners, film, plaques, medals, etc., recording episodes of trade union and labour movement experience and the individuals and organisations who took part. And, while you are thinking . . . don't forget our own need for the older issues of *LM*.

Nicola Seyd

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Strike: A Live History 1887-1971, R. A. Leeson. Allen & Unwin, 246 pp, £3.75.

Aid and Liberation: A Socialist Study of Aid Policies, Judith Hart. Gollancz, 288 pp, £3.80.

Marxism-Leninism on War and Army, Colonel B. Byely and others. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 432 pp, £1.25.

Leninism and the Battle of Ideas, Y. Modrzhinskaya. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 364 pp, 75p.

Health Protection in the USSR, Y. Lisitsin. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 126 pp, 35p.

The Vietnam Story, Ivan Shchedrov. Novosti (Central Books), 238 pp, 75p.

Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy, Barrington Moore Jr. Penguin, 560 pp, £1.50.

The Political Economy of Growth, Paul A. Baran. Penguin, 476 pp, 75p.

International Politics, Joseph Frankel. Penguin, 266 pp, 50p.

On Revolution, Hannah Arendt. Penguin, 350 pp, 60p.

Men in Dark Times, Hannah Arendt. Penguin, 268 pp, 50p.

The Agony of the American Left, Christopher Lasch. Penguin, 208 pp, 50p.

China Shakes the World, Jack Beldon. Penguin, 688 pp, 90p.

The Earnings Conflict, Wilfred Brown. Penguin, 128 pp, 35p.

George Brown—Portrait of a Communist Leader, Mick Jenkins. North West Communist Party History Group, 30 pp, 20p.

A Welsh Heretic: Dr William Price, Llantrisant, Islwyn ap Nicholas. Ffynnon Press, 48 pp, 40p.

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